

Pocahontas and commend them on their upcoming 65th wedding anniversary.

Mr. and Mrs. Christiansen were married on June 16th, 1946 in Pomeroy, IA and have since helped bring three children, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren into this world.

Prior to their wedding, LeRoy was a proud Iowa farmer before he was asked to put his career on hold and defend his country in the Second World War. LeRoy served his country honorably as an Army Air Corp nose gunner in Italy before being discharged with honors and returning to Iowa.

LeRoy and Louise were born, educated and have now retired in Iowa out of love for a state that has given them so many joys and blessings.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent LeRoy and Louise in the United States Congress. Mr. and Mrs. Christiansen are a true testament to Iowa's reputation of service and commitment. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating them and I wish them continued happiness in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE 36TH ANNUAL CAPITAL PRIDE CELEBRATION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the 36th annual Capital Pride, a celebration of the national capital area's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) communities and their families and friends.

In 1975, Deacon MacCubbin, owner of the Lambda Rising Bookstore in Dupont Circle, launched the first Capital Pride. It began as a block party on 20th Street, between R and S Streets, NW. By 1980, the festival had outgrown being a block party and moved to Francis Junior High School in 1981, with the Pride Parade becoming an annual part of the festivities. As Capital Pride continued to grow, it moved to Freedom Plaza in 1990 and then onto Pennsylvania Avenue in 1997. Today, Capital Pride consists of more than 10 days of events, including Trans Pride and Latino Pride, organized by the Capital Pride Planning Committee and dozens of local community partners.

Capital Pride's 2011 theme, "Celebration and Opportunity, Paving the Way," acknowledges the many successes of the GLBT community and the work that still needs to be done to ensure equality.

This year, Capital Pride culminates with what has been declared D.C.'s best parade, the Capital Pride Parade, on June 11, and "The Main Event," a street fair on Pennsylvania Avenue in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol, on June 12. Capital Pride's producer, the Capital Pride Alliance, Inc., predicts an attendance of 250,000, making Capital Pride one of the largest GLBT festivals in the United States.

I have marched in Pride parades since coming to Congress to emphasize universal human rights and the importance of enacting federal legislation to secure those rights for the GLBT community. Congress has much

work to do. We must pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, the Respect for Marriage Act, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, and the Uniting American Families Act.

I ask the House to join me in recognizing the 36th annual Capital Pride and to welcome its attendees.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION, AND AWARENESS ACT OF 2011

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act of 2011, which will help provide accurate, evidence-based information to pregnant and breast-feeding women about medications, chemical exposures, foodborne illness, and other exposures associated with birth defects or health risks to a breastfed infant.

This bill would establish a grant program to revitalize the national network of pregnancy risk information services, more than half of which have closed over the last decade due to lack of funding. Over 70,000 women seek information from these essential services each year. It would also establish a national information campaign to help increase public awareness among health providers and at-risk populations.

The legislation has been endorsed by the Allergy and Asthma Network, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, March of Dimes Foundation, Mothers of Asthmatics, Organization of Teratology Information Specialists, Spina Bifida Association, and the Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. I hereby submit for the record letters of support from these organizations.

There is nothing more important than protecting our children, and this legislation will help expectant and breast-feeding mothers to obtain clear, accurate information about the potential risks of medications, illnesses, and other exposures during pregnancy and breastfeeding, helping them to both avoid risks and improve healthy behaviors like taking folic acid. This legislation will help mothers and health care professionals access critical information to help ensure their babies are healthy, and I urge my colleagues to support our efforts.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ALLERGY,
ASTHMA, & IMMUNOLOGY,
Washington, DC,
April 11, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DeLAURO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. DELAURO: On behalf of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, I write to express strong support for the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act. This legislation will fund the national network of pregnancy risk information services that are currently severely underfunded. These services counsel pregnant and breast-feeding women on exposures to medications, chemicals, infections,

and other risks to healthy pregnancy and healthy infants.

A pregnant or breast-feeding woman lives in fear of any exposure that might pose a risk to her pregnancy or her baby. This is because of the paucity of information on the impact of exposures to medications, chemicals, infections and illnesses during pregnancy and nursing. Some exposures can be avoided, but for women with chronic diseases such as asthma, epilepsy, hypertension, or depression, continued use of medication may be essential to the health of both the woman and her infant. Asthma affects about 8% of pregnant women—over 300,000 women per year. Some women simply discontinue their asthma medications during pregnancy out of fear of a potential birth defect. However, uncontrolled asthma may pose a greater risk of complicating the pregnancy. Our organization has initiated a major study of asthma drugs in pregnancy in collaboration with the nation's pregnancy risk information services. This study simply could not be done without the resources available through these services. Unfortunately, more than half of the pregnancy risk information services in the country have closed over the past decade, and those that remain have sustained severe funding cuts. The legislation you are introducing will increase support for these important programs and assure that the vitally important counseling and research services they provide can be reinvigorated.

The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology is the largest professional medical specialty organization in the United States representing allergists, asthma specialists, clinical immunologists, allied health professionals, and others dedicated to improving the treatment of allergic diseases through research and education. We thank you for your leadership in support of prevention and research related to birth defects and are pleased to offer the Academy's support for your legislation.

Sincerely,

DENNIS K. LEDFORD, M.D.,
President, American Academy of
Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology.

SPINA BIFIDA ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, May 5, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DeLAURO,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DeLAURO: On behalf of the Spina Bifida Association (SBA), the only national voluntary health organization working on behalf of the estimated 166,000 individuals who live with all forms of Spina Bifida and their families, I am writing to express our support to you and the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction and Awareness Act. This legislation will provide much-needed support to pregnancy risk information services, which play a crucial role in educating women on how to reduce the risk of preventable birth defects, including Spina Bifida.

One of the primary goals of SBA is to increase awareness of the importance of folic acid consumption among the 65 million women in the United States of child-bearing age. The risk of Spina Bifida and other serious birth defects can be reduced by up to 70%, if women of childbearing age consume 400 micrograms (400 mcg) of folic acid (a B-vitamin) every day. Grants funded under the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction and Awareness Act will help ensure that women who are considering becoming pregnant have access to information on the importance of folic acid supplementation, as well as other key steps they can take to ensure a healthy pregnancy.